

## WSDOT Road Construction Update for Snohomish County

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### Hillside settling down; Crews continue to monitor SR 530

After a weekend of monitoring, we are relieved to announce that an [unstable hillside](#) on State Route 530 appears to be stabilizing west of Darrington in Snohomish County. The hillside only moved three-eighths of an inch in the last three days.

It's a good sign, but we're not out of the woods yet. We're going to continue to keep a very close eye on the hillside and the road. We've hired a specialized geotechnical firm to install highly sensitive electronic equipment that will monitor the hillside's movement. The firm will then recommend a solution based upon the results.

WSDOT crews put the Skaglund Hill location on the hot spot list on Thursday, Feb. 9, after maintenance crews, who routinely monitor the area, noticed cracks forming in the road. As a short term fix, crews repaved the roadway to soften the bumps and seal cracks.

But, WSDOT engineers are taking no chances. On Friday, engineers installed 32 markers to measure the slide. Now, they plan to return with geo-techs who will take deep core samples and install more sophisticated equipment. This area is a known slide zone with unstable soils reaching down more than 40 feet.

Currently, the road is open and safe for travel. If WSDOT has to close the road suddenly, drivers would be forced to take a 110 mile detour into Skagit County using Highway 20.

However, engineers are analyzing the possibility of making an old railroad grade the detour route. This would allow many smaller vehicles to get around the slide without having to use a 100-mile long detour. Friday, environmental specialists walked the area to determine whether the ground could support passenger vehicle traffic and truck traffic.

We'll continue to examine our options. The last thing we want to do is force drivers to take a 100-mile detour.

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